

## FROM THE EDITORS

IN THIS ISSUE, JOSEPH GENZ AND TERRY L. HUNT, Department of Anthropology, University of Hawai'i, contribute a paper titled "El Niño/Southern Oscillation and Rapa Nui Prehistory." Their study of the island's climate history provides further information about the climatic past on Rapa Nui and its possible effects on the society.

ANDREAS MIETH AND HANS-RUDOLF BORK, University of Kiel, are recently back from a successful field season on Rapa Nui, and here provide us with another fascinating study of Poike peninsula. Their study describes how the peninsula must have appeared in times past, and what happened to the great palm forests that once stood there. For those of us who have tramped around on the now-desolate far eastern edges of Poike, it is amazing to hear how much information they have been able to gather, given the extreme erosion and general degradation of that area.

THE LONG-AWAITED PART 3 of Ana Maria Arredondo's "Life Stories of Woman in Rapanui Society" is included in this issue. Part 1 appeared in Vol. 14(2), "Women in Myths and Legends"; Part 2, titled "Rapanui Women as seen through the Eyes of Seafarers, Missionaries and Scientists in the 18<sup>th</sup> century" was in Vol. 14(3). This final segment, "Gender Studies, Part III," provides the life stories of nine persons of an average age of seventy who were selected on the basis of their belonging to different families and who were interviewed by Arredondo. This is an amazing (and sometimes sad) glimpse into life on the island during those early years. We commend Ms Arredondo for compiling these life histories while it is still possible to do so. All three parts of Arredondo's paper were translated by Louise Noel.

OTHER PAPERS INCLUDE ONE ON RONGORONGO, contributed by Jacques Guy; and a fascinating analysis of the culture and future of Rapa Nui by Francesco di Castri. Di Castri first visited the island in 1961 and thus has an enormous depth of knowledge and understanding of things "Rapanui".

THIS ISSUE WELCOMES Ann M. Altman and Judith Schwartz to the *Journal*. Their translation of a letter from Brother Eugène Eyraud (see "A Look Back", page 49) describes his nine-month stay on Rapa Nui in 1864. This letter, which is not apparently available elsewhere in English, provides a amazing glimpse of Rapa Nui's past.

With regard to Eugène Eyraud, Grant McCall (personal communication) mentions that he knows of only one substantial publication: Brother Eugène Eyraud, 1864, *Lettres des Missionnaires*, pp. 168-208. This letter was written in 1864 to TRP (Tres Reverend Pere) Euthyme Rouchouze (1812-1869). Rouchouze was the third head (1853-1869) of the Congrega-

tion des Sacrés Coeurs. The letter was the centerpiece of Eyraud's attempt to convince the Congregation that they should send another mission to Rapa Nui, which would include himself, naturally. They did so eventually, but Eyraud was not in charge; he returned to the island with Father Hippolyte (Basile) Roussel (1824-1898). Roussel transferred from Mangareva, where he had been working with the strong-willed Father Honoré Laval.

Eyraud and Roussel arrived on Rapa Nui in March 1866. Father Hippolyte/Basile (he used both names in Church registers on Rapa Nui and Mangareva) returned to Mangareva in 1871 with 168 passage-paying Rapanui (they had paid with their lands on Rapa Nui). At that time there were only 936 people living on Mangareva and the influx of Rapanui was an attempt to repopulate the archipelago – at the expense of Easter Island. Roussel ended his days in Mangareva, dying there 27 years later.

Eyraud and Roussel were joined on Rapa Nui in 1866 by two others who had been sent there from Valparaíso: Father Gaspar Zuhmbohm (1823-1887), head of the mission; and Lay Brother Théodule Escolan (1818-1904), the latter a resident of Chile. There is a letter from Father Pacôme Olivier (head of the SS.CC at Valparaíso) to Rouchouze, also dated December 1864, in which he recaps much of what Eyraud recounts, but he provides, in addition, the background and context for Eyraud's work. Eyraud's letter is just his own account of his experiences as the first missionary on Rapa Nui. Father Pacôme Olivier – note it is his name that is the source of the Rapanui surname "Pakomio" today – makes it clear that no Congregation personnel should be sent to the island on their own. Eyraud died of tuberculosis in 1868 and was buried on Rapa Nui. It is sad that, while he was trying to save Rapanui souls, he infected many of the islanders with the disease. We are grateful to Grant McCall for providing these fascinating details.



IN THIS PAST YEAR WE HAVE LOST several scholars who devoted much of their lives to the study of Polynesian history and culture. In our previous issue, we noted the passing of famed explorer, Thor Heyerdahl (*RNJ* 16:2). In this issue we note the death of Heyerdahl's co-author and friend, Ed Ferdon. With Ed's passing, Arne Skjølsvold and Gonzalo Figueroa are surviving members of the Norwegian Expedition. Thanks to Don Ryan for the photograph of Ed.

Our last issue also mentioned the death of Ramón Campbell, along with well-known Rapanui elder, Rafael Haoa. In this issue we are sad to add the names of two other Rapanui islanders, Nicholas Haoa and Felipe Teao. Also last year, Jehanne Teilhet-Fisk lost her battle against cancer, but she will be long remembered as a gutsy lady who influenced the next generation of Pacific art historians.